Kansutoppu!

(かんすとっぷ!)

Arc 03

Rachimu

(ラチム)

Story Description:

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Original Story can be found here: Link

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Chapter 17: Beginner Crusher Grundom (Part 1)

“Leave all of your equipment and belongings, and perhaps I’ll spare your life.”

A big guy who had to be at least 3 meters tall pinned down a party of C rank adventurers with only his fist.

The young sword fighter’s skills wasn’t much use, his party members were already at death’s door.

The magician’s spells weren’t effective against the guy either.

The lives of the sword fighter’s comrades were on the line, so the equipment was surrendered to the guy.

“Just be obedient and I’ll make it as painless as possible…Come on, hurry it up.”

The large guy violently threw the items and food on the ground.

The recovery items fell on the ground and the contents were spilled.

“There aren’t any women in your party, I was looking forward to having a little fun with one. All the members in your party are guys,

are you homo? Bring along a woman.”

Being falsely accused like that, the young man stayed silent.

Even though the young man was an experienced fighter, nothing seemed to work on the guy.

For the first time since he was born, the young man met an overwhelming opponent and had no willpower to resist.

“Well, I already got what I need, here you go. Catch.”

The large guy threw the bag up in the sky, hitting the face of the young man as it came down.

The young man didn’t pick it up, he just stayed silent and looked down.

“You, stop being an adventurer. It’s good that I’m being merciful, but if I was a monster you wouldn’t have survived. They’re merciless. How long have you been C rank?”

“……..half a year.”

“Wwhaaa, half a year!”

The large guy was was more surprised than he should have been, and was holding his stomach while laughing out loud.

“Y-you don’t have any talent at all! From D rank it takes half a month to rank up, right? What kind of stupid things were you taking for quests, monster materials or crap?

You're stupid, but you're suitable for odd jobs. You raised to C rank doing that, and have been there for half a year. Aren't you such an idiot. Hyahahahahahahahah! kuku! hahahahahahaha!"

And again, the large guy laughed out loud.

The young man's frustration didn't spill out, he was desperately holding it all in.

"You don't have any talent. By the way, is that guy dead?"

After saying that the young man worked hard treating them.

Looking at the situation, the large guy was giggling and laughing.

* * *

"Ryua-chan, are you done?"

"A-a little bit more!"

We have been inside the weapon shop for a while, I had trouble choosing this or that for 20 minutes.

I have 200 gold with me.

One is an iron sword which is 180 gold.

The other is a wing sword which is 150 gold.

The iron sword's sharpness is higher.

On the other hand, the wing sword can be swung faster.

If I pay 180 gold, the 20 gold left will all be spent on lunch.

The pocket money I have totals only 200 gold.

Roel is in charge of the money from the quests, but not the everyday living allowance.

I've been saving up till I had 200 gold.

The iron sword is sharper, in some cases that may decide a win or loss.

The wing sword is faster, I may be able to quickly save someone in a dire situation.

Which one should I buy…

I've been reaching out my hand for the item and then drawing back repeatedly.

The old guy at the counter was waiting with an expression that seemed to say "If you are going to buy do it quickly".

"Hey, Ryua-chan, I'm sure you had a sword right? Isn't it fine to not buy anything?"

"T-that sword has some kind of dangerous effect. Because it would be dangerous if Roel

got caught up in it, I'd like to avoid using it as much as possible. That's why I'm looking into getting a normal sword for fighting."

That flash of annihilation. The explosion that swallowed up the <King of Destruction>. Its power is quite a menace to me.

I would look like an idiot if I accidentally invoked the weapon's effect and got caught up in the explosion, so I really need to make up my mind and decide.

"Ryua-chan, you're already strong to start with, isn't it fine regardless which you choose?"

"That's not the problem you know…"

Roel doesn't understand my plight. Whether good or bad, it's just that one problem.

Even if I buy the iron sword, its power might not be as strong as I'm imagining. Same for the wing sword, its speed might not actually be that fast. My worrying won't end.

I want to try testing them, but if I don't test it in an actual battle then it's useless.

"Hey, how about buying both."

"No."

It was an immediate reply. Roel is terribly strict towards money.

I wonder if it's her methodical personality, she is really precise when she manages the household finances book.

"Mean…"

I showed Roel a crestfallen look , but it wasn't effective.

I wasn't able to trick her with my act.

"If you can deal with my quest then I can get you better weapons, just so you know."

Unable to let things continue as they were, the old owner of the weapon shop suddenly suggested something.

If I take it, I can get a better weapon.

No matter what I have to do, I'm ready.

"As a matter of fact——-"

Just as the old guy was about to say something, the weapon shop's door was quietly opened.

Putting the explanation on hold, the old guy said "Welcome" but that person said nothing and walked towards us.

"How much would all of these weapons go for? It's fine no matter how much you buy them for."

“Wouldn’t you be in trouble if you sell all these? You, are you that sword fighter?”

“It’s fine, I don’t need them anymore.”

sigh “Then…”

Without getting a proper explanation about the situation, the old guy started to trade.

“Ok, this is all.”

“Thank you”

After receiving the money, the man went outside quietly.

His figure from behind was hunched over and had no reliability to it at all, it was as if he would collapse at any time.

“That guy is probably feeling guilty. Failing a quest…every adventurer will experience that. We failed one in the past as well, Geneki was feeling pretty down at that time.”

(TL:オレも昔、現役だった頃はヘコんだもんさ)

“Geneki? Old man, you used to be an adventurer?

“Aah, how nostalgic…in those days there wasn’t anyone that didn’t know the name of Kozow.”

Kozow, the weapon shop owner, started to get earnestly immersed in remembering.

His hair is now mostly gone and his stomach is big, right now there isn’t even a shadow of his past.

(TL: 頭の 毛 は薄く なり 、下っ腹 はぽっこりと 出 ていて 今では その影 もない 。)

“Being an adventurer is like living in a dream. Once you become A ranked, depending on the quest you can handle, you can receive tens of thousands of gold. But of course there are setbacks and you have to deal with a lot things.”

“T-ten thousand…”

All I have is 200 gold, I wonder how small this is compared to that.

A rank…money is not why I want to become one but I’m getting more and more excited at the thought of becoming one.

“Oops, before i forget. About the matter earlier, if you want to know more I think the guild has the quest documents. Try looking for the name Kozow.”

In the end, Roel reached the limit of her patience and left the store buying the iron sword.

I thought that she was a docile person, but she has an unexpectedly strong personality at times like this.

I ended up finding a new side of Roel again.

* * *

We went to the guild and the person we saw earlier at the weapon shop was here.

He was sitting at the counter facing Rintei who had a scrupulous expression.

"Are you really sure about this?"

"Mm, I don't have any regrets."

"In which case, I will do the legal process for deleting your adventurer registration. Once deleted, if you want to be an adventurer again you'll have to start over at D rank. Well then, I will start the paperwork."

Deleting the registration, is that person quitting being an adventurer?

I wonder if he went through something heart-breaking…I don't know if he did but if you look closely at he was clenching his teeth.

You can easily see his distress.

"I have nothing much to say, but you are safe so you don't need to get yourself too worked up. Beginner Crusher Grundom…we put out a quest for his extermination but there hasn't been any progress related to it, even now. Some C ranking people took it but they ended up coming back pretty beaten up. This town doesn't have many B rank adventurers to start with, and the ones we had left to do other quests. And Gantetsu-san has returned to the Avangard Kingdom castle town…However, if a B rank adventurer takes it they will immediately take him down. If that happens, someone like Grundom will not be here anymore. You're still young, so please don't give up yet."

"What do you know? If you have the spare time to meddle unnecessarily you should use that time to start the legal procedure."

The man looked like who was about to cry spat out those words.

I wonder if he experienced something really mortifying? He was clenching his hand into a fist and was trembling.

Beginner Crusher Grundom, I wonder what that person did to this man.

"Who's Beginner Crusher Grundom?"

"They say that he ambushes beginner adventurers when they go to dungeons."

I didn't know someone like that was here.

From the way Roel spoke, it seems that she doesn't know much about it either.

"Ok, the procedure is done."

The man who wasn't an adventurer anymore went out without saying anything.

"I feel bad for that person. If I hadn't met Ryua-chan…"

From the way it looks, it seems he's getting more depressed as time goes on.

He’s like that because of Grundom.

I’m interested in taking the quest for his extermination, but I should do the quest for Kozow-san before that.

Together with Roel we searched for his quest.

Thanks to her teaching me the how to read letters, I can read a little bit of them. I still have a long way to go before I can read properly though.

Therefore, I’ll leave it to Roel.

“There it is, this is it, right?”

[I want you to mine me some iron at the 4th floor of Avangard Cave.]

[Client: Weapon Shop IronMan Shopkeeper, Kozow]

“It’s the <Avangard Cave> from Pablo’s quest we did before, right?”

“That’s right, we went as far as the 2nd floor but now it’s the 4th floor.”

We were persistently warned to not go any further than 2nd floor because strong monsters loiter there, so we didn’t.

But I wonder what’s actually down there.

It seem the quest is for C ranks, I guess it’ll be fine.

“So to confirm, the quest from Kozow-san. And this time Ryua-san and Roel-san will take it. Right. I understand.”

It seems the way Rintei is talking right now is the usual way of talking to someone who is taking a quest.

It was written that we are going “to mine” but I actually don’t know what I have to do.

First of all, let’s go back to the weapon shop and hear the details for the quest.

* * *

“That’s right, then here you go.”

Kozow gave us a mining set.

The danger level for the 2nd floor of Avangarde Cave is about 3, it seem at the lowest floor, the 5th floor, the danger level is generally about 8-10.

I wonder if that cobra came from the 3rd floor.

The monsters on the 2nd floor weren’t that big of a deal, and Roel’s level raised so I’m not that worried.

“On the 3rd floor there is a monster that can poison you, so be careful”

Following Kozow’s advice we prepared many antidotes to counter it.

Something like poison won’t affect me, and for Roel who is behind me I absolutely won’t let them touch her.

Right from the start I thought that we didn’t need any, but it’s better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it.

“Well then, have a safe trip.”

“Yeah, take care.”

* * *

Someone was looking at the town’s entrance from far away.

Two adventurers had just left Kwimill.

When the giant noticed that both of them were girls, his mouth warped into a grin.

“Oooh, it’s been a long time since a woman left town. I smell like piss…Oh well, that’s fine, so it’s time to play!”

The giant hiding in the woods stood up.

He would stand out too much in the plains, so it wasn’t a good place to hide.

Grundom was merely lurking in the woods and silently observing the town’s entrance.

There are a lot of beginner adventurers at Kwimill, so it was an ideal hunting ground for him.

Of course, he would stay hidden if the adventurers seemed skilled.

He plays it safe since he doesn’t know how good they are.

Grundom looks for beginners because they’re easy targets.

Really, just for this reason.

“From the packs those two are carrying, they’re probably going to mine at the 4th floor of Avangard Cave. I’ll be going ahead to ambush them, so I should take the shortcut. Kukukukukuku!”

Even though he a brawny type that was good for hunting, he also had quite the brain. He started planning his ambush…

Chapter 18: Beginner Crusher Grundom (Part 2)

“Tei!”

A *Bonk* resounded as the <Cave Rabbit> was defeated.

Roel was able to hit and fatally injure a <Cave Rabbit>.

The first time I saw her do it was at level 2, so its natural she can do it now, but she seems more resolved. It’s obviously different from before.

Compared to that dreadful ghost mansion, I wonder if it’s because the is cute.

I think I get it.

“So, the 2nd floor isn’t that scary anymore!”

We went onwards as Roel said that, as if celebrating something.

She was pretty happy. Behind me, I almost didn’t notice a bat flying towards us.

I slapped it with my palm and watched it vanish, and I regained my attentive composure.

(TL:それ をボク が平手 で 叩い て 消し飛ば し た のを見 て、ようやく 我 に返っ た。)

“Just like a bug……..Ryua-chan, you really are strong.”

“Using my hand is easier since it’s quite troublesome to keep drawing my sword……”

Returning to the room where Pablo had wanted us to get the spring water from, there was a small room just beyond it which lead down to the next floor.

And thus, we arrived at the 3rd floor.

If I remember correctly the quest’s goods should be on the 4th floor.

It feels somewhat dusky here.

This time we’re doing some mining for ore. It’s probably because of people going in and out frequently, but there were lights on the walls which was a relief.

I was worried that the monsters here were going to be bothersome to beat.

Compared to the 2nd floor, the passageway here is very spacious so it would be easy to fight with monsters here.

Like on the 2nd floor, there were treasure boxes…but the items inside didn’t change much.

“We just need to follow the light, this seems pretty straightforward.”

“Yeah, but according to Kozow-san there are monsters that can poison us here, right…?”

[Killer Tail x3 appeared! HP:53]

A scorpion-like monster with a height up to about my waist appeared from inside the cave.

They pointed its tail at us, there seems to be a poisonous needle on the tail.

For 3 of these things to suddenly appear.

The lower floors sure are more severe.

And on top of its quick appearance, it has a long reach.

The scorpion didn't move from its spot, instead it extended its tail to stab me.

I drew my sword and bent down to evade, from there I swung my sword in an arc.

The tail was cleanly cut and fell on the ground.

Without any delay I bisected all of them.

[Ryua attacked! Killer Tail received 382991 damage!]

[Killer Tail was defeated HP 0/53]

Just as I thought, using the sword is better.

The sharpness of the iron sword is good…but the wing sword may have been faster to swing.

It's too late to worry about that, but when this quest is done Kozow said that I can get a better weapon.

I need to work hard.

"Amazing, amazing! If it was me I couldn't have dodged it."

Roel clapped.

The truth is I didn't need to dodge, but I really didn't like the needle so I ended up dodging.

"Just as I thought, we won't be needing the antidotes."

I thoroughly looked inside Roel's tool bag.

I thought antidotes would be good for an emergency, but I can probably handle hundreds of thousands of those <Killer Tail> monsters.

(TL: 万が一の備えと思っていたけどこれじゃ万どころか億だ)

After all, the danger level is just 10.

Advancing on, the passageways are so vast that there isn't really any forked pathways.

We arrived on the 4th floor without any difficulties. When we reached that place I sensed a strange presence.

"I wonder who's here?"

"Eh, there was an adventurer that went in before us?"

"I think it's different than an adventurer."

"D-different? Then who…?"

All I felt was a leaking bloodthirst. It's different from the way a monsters does it.

No mistake, it was a human for sure.

I don't what that person is planning, but if you are coming for us then I will stand against you.

[Killer Tail appeared! HP:53]

[Transforming Frog appeared! HP:65]

I was worried about the bloodthirst, so I didn't spare any time worrying about those monsters. I just slashed them as I passed by.

On the way there was a treasure box, but it was already opened.

If I had to guess who took the treasure, it would be the person releasing the bloodthirst.

I pretended not to notice as we arrived at the mining location.

Using the mining set, we immediately started to work.

Behind us we heard a thundering roar and footsteps.

Thud with that heavy sound it stood before us.

Looking around, we were in a dead end of the mining spot. We were driven into a corner to confront the monster.

[Behemoth of Catastrophe appeared! HP:815]

It was a monster with a unique appearance. It had the body of a rhinoceros the head of an elephant.

To us this passageway felt wide, but to this monster it would be cramped.

"Floor monster…!"

Roel was speechless.

It was something Gantetsu taught us before while he was drunk: Floor Monster.

I don't how strong this guy is, and from the start adventurers just end up being this

guy's prey.

I probably should've asked Gantetsu about this monster.

It's certainly strong, but this monster seems very similar to something I fought on the 2nd floor of the <Caves of Hell>, they almost have the same appearance.

I'm worried this guy might suddenly start rampaging, I should quickly dispose of it before that happens.

As I thought that, it keeled over raising a thundering roar as fell down.

It didn't twitch nor move, and behind the monster there was a big guy.

The big guy smiled as he waved his hand that defeated the monster.

"You girls, you're saved"

I wouldn't be as tall as this man even if I doubled my height, while thinking that the big guy approached us.

A smooth, shining head and thin moustache, the muscles of his body looks like they belonged on a monster.

"What are two girls like you doing this far in the dungeon? That was a pretty dangerous situation wasn't it? From the 2nd floor onwards, adventurers who are over-confident in their skills challenge this guy and end up dying. Floor monsters are incomparably strong, don't you agree?"

"Um, thank you very much for saving us."

Roel lightly bowed and the big guy patted our heads.

He moved his hands down and touched our shoulders.

"Then, leave all of your stuff here. Compared to your lives, it's cheap right?"

As I thought, it's like that.

I understood immediately from his excessively confident expression and pressuring gentleness.

"T-hat is…wait a minute…"

"Wait a what now? Impossible, you don't have anything to pay me back for saving you? Hmmm?"

"Is there any other way…?"

"Then, XXXX with this old man."

"Eh, ah, what? What is that?"

There was a question mark floating above our heads. I haven't heard of whatever he was suggesting, but at the same time I also don't know anything about stuff like that.

Anyhow, I think this guy's purpose was this from the start, I really don't have to hold back.

I seized the hand on my left shoulder.

"Oooh? Something wrong?"

(TL:「お、お？　なんだなんだ？)」

My right hand looked like it belonged on a child compared to his hand, and the big guy just narrowed his mouth while watching me.

Then I exerted a little strength onto his wrist.

"O-oooowwwwwwwwwwwww!! A-a-agyaaaaaaaaaaah!!"

The guy was on his knees screaming, he was desperately trying to remove my hand.

I just let go of his hand and he unsteadily moved backwards.

"W-w-what was that?"

"What was what?" is what I want to reply. He was probably confused.

"For a kid to something like that to me, Grundom-sama?"

fuuu-fuuu he was blowing the hand that I seized earlier while looking my way.

Grundom, so this is the guy.

He was a good for nothing person, more so than I expected.

"So you are the <Beginner Crusher> Grundom. Why are you doing this?"

"Ho ho, so I'm not just a rumor anymore."

"The guild person said that when the B class adventurers return they would immediately subjugate you."

I glared at him who was staring at Roel with dirty eyes.

His sweat slowly stopped forming, and finally the the pain on his hand started to recede. Grundom released his hand.

"Ku ku, like I care!"

While saying that he simultaneously headed towards Roel.

He dashed at her, ignoring the fact that the cave floor was dangerous and protruding rocks littered the area.

(TL:　突起 などで 歩き にくい 洞窟 の 地面 など 物ともしない 慣れた 動き でダッシュし てくる。)

He planned to strike Roel with his log-like arm, but he was too slow.

I sighed and then jumped between him and Roel, stopping his arm with one hand.

"Ugh!"

He just doesn't learn, huh? Forgetting what happened before, the hand he was so proud of was injured again.

Grundom was suffering as if he hit an iron pole.

"Once again, let's hear it. Why are you doing this?"

"M-mind your own business!"

After all this happened, I'm not composed anymore and he was starting to get angry.

He was breathing heavily and was clenching his teeth.

Grundom once again tried to make a fist.

He attempted to do a flurry of straight punches with both of his fists, though this time he ignored Roel and went for me.

Left, right, back. I elegantly evaded them.

I evade to the left and his arm hits the air.

The wind from his punches made my hair slightly sway.

No matter how many times he swung at me, he wasn't even able to graze me. His face flushed like an octopus after he was done.

"Haaa, haaa haaa……..w-what the heck are you……."

"I won't lose to someone like you."

"Just what the heck are you!?"

He was barking words at me and simultaneously came at me with his whole body.

His punches won't work on me, let alone a tackle.

I stopped him with my right hand.

It was like he was running towards an invisible wall and hit it but his feet just kept going.

Being stopped, his body wasn't moving at all but his feet were still moving like an engine.

"OOAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

He did an angry roar like a beast, threatening me.

It was quite the ugly display. Without realizing his defeat or admitting he lost, he was desperately shouting.

“Bastard! Just what are you! Why is someone like you here in this shitty dungeon! Are you an A rank?!”

“Just recently I became C rank, you know.”

“Don’t lie to me!!”

“It wasn’t a lie. Here, look.”

I showed my Adventurer Card to Grundom.

What he saw written there was the truth, up until now he was angry but right now he was quiet.

“It’s a lie……..”

Grundom dropped his arms down in astonishment.

Roel was continuously holding on her staff.

I was dumbfounded by all of this, and furthermore he continued to show denial.

“No matter how many times I have to ask, I will. Why are you doing this?”

“J-just leave me alone!”

He was out of breath and was exhaling and inhaling raggedly while he continued to be stubborn.

Then he thought of an idea, he suddenly brandished the hands he had lowered before.

It’s probably his trump card. It was just like my <Sonic Ripper>, tearing up the air while being terribly fast as it flew towards me.

I drew my sword and released a light <Sonic Ripper>.

Contact. Slowly, slowly, the force of both attacks were dispersed.

In the end, my attack negated his attack.

Though there was still some power left from my attack as it hit Grundom, and blood was gushing out.

“Gaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

Grundom collapsed onto the ground.

“Aha oops…….”

Hearing the really painful groan Grundom was making, Roel rushed over.

Roel used <Heal> on him.

I wonder if the pain lessened, Grundom opened his mouth.

"U…ugh…ouch"

"…does it still hurt?"

"Ow…it hurts…"

"Please don't do something like this again."

"Damn it…damn it!"

After being healed, he was scornfully glaring at Roel.

Then tears came out from his eyes. For such a big adult to cry with some mucus coming out of his nose…

He was mad until now, but he was like a different person while crying.

"I……as I thought this is just my limit!"

"You should've listened to what Ryua-chan was saying earlier. Why are you doing such things?"

"I hated it you know…the difference in ranks. We started at the same time and yet that guy became an A rank. We both did the quests, and that guy ranked up to A. In the end I was completely left behind. As time passed, one by one those guys raised from C to B and I was completely passed over…I thought I had reached my limit. I failed the A rank examination and became eternally a B rank, wandering aimlessly. I cannot beat an A rank monster like those guys, and even the lower ranked guys eventually passed me. It was mortifying…I was miserable…and after some thinking, I started crushing beginners. Those guys were filled with hope, those beginners will achieve great things… I'm jealous of them."

It was as if I had cold water poured one me, listening to what Grundom talked about.

(TL: 決壊して流れ込んできた水のようにグルンドムは語る。)

I don't understand what Grundom felt, but I still scolded him.

"Even I was weak from the start. Even so, I didn't give up and made it this far. Even that old senile guy didn't stop me."

(TL:おじさんみたいにハつ当たりもしなかった」)

"…do you know about the Level Cap?"

"Level Cap?"

It was the first time I heard anything about that.

* * *

Monster Book

[Killer Tail HP:53]

It’s a scorpion. It weakens its prey using a poison needle and eats them.

It may look big, but pay attention to its long reach. Its speed isn’t as deadly as its range.

It’s not scary as an opponent to a prepared adventurer.

However, its dangerous if a group of them appears so being surrounded by them is really dangerous.

Chapter 19: Beginner Crusher Grundom (End)

"Level Cap……..?"

Roel also doesn't know about it.

"When you return to the guild after finishing the quest, normally you measure your level. 'I'll never stop enjoying this moment'…I was also like that. But, what if one day your level stopped changing? One day it will come and no matter how many days you continue to fight after that, it won't change…that's when you've reached your level cap. Each person has a different level limit."

"Level……..limit"

I unintentionally murmured.

Each person has a different maximum limit.

I never considered that.

I don't know what my level is, however since I've made it this far I believed that anyone can become stronger as long as they keep working hard.

"My level continued to stay at Level 24…"

"B-but don't give up, continue fighting! Try to measure it again…"

"Metalika country"

Suddenly Grundom said the name of that country, I've heard about it from Roel before.

"Apparently they a have a machine that can measure your Level Cap. I couldn't take it anymore so I headed towards the country of Metalika. It was such an amazing country… there was an iron bracelet that shows your current level. It can also measure the level of other people…"

"Such a thing exists…"

I wanted to find out more, but what we're talking about right now really isn't useful nor what I originally wanted to hear. I don't think he's lying…I still have a lot to learn about this world and everything in it.

"You, whats your level?"

"I don't know, no matter how many times I entered the iron box at the guild <OverFlow> comes out…"

"O-overflow you say…"

Grundom was making something like a sour face and shut his mouth.

No matter how many times I tried to measure my level each Iron Box did the same thing, so I eventually just stopped trying.

It never looked like it was actually broken, and if that's the case my level…

"So your level is over 100. I can't believe it…"

"Over level 100? Me?"

"It can't be helped that Kwimill is in the sticks…however to reach a level over 100…such thing is already S rank, is what those guys said…"

I sort of expected this, my level being over 100.

Roel and the others are able to measure their level, whereas I'm never able to.

My Level is more than 100, so I wonder what my real level is.

I want to know…

"My wounds are mostly healed…thank you, miss."

"Are you able to move right now?"

Roel quickly moved away from Grundom.

From what I see, it's pretty obvious she doesn't like him.

"You don't have to worry, it's fine, no matter what I do now. I…"

I deflected a knife that was flying at Grundom's neck.

The knife rotated in the air and stuck into the cave wall.

"Hey…"

Being targeted by the knife, Grundom realized that his life was in jeopardy.

"Uhiiiiiii~…seriously?"

He lifted his pink glasses and pointed a finger towards me. He was a tall guy with slicked back hair that turned spiky on the back of his head and he was wearing a very pink outfit. His sense of fashion hurt the eyes.

"You, rank D right? Seriously?"

He was confused while he was bending his waist back and forth.

"Y-you are…!"

"You went too far, Grundom-chan. Because it was so~ troubling to the village I went and accepted the subjugation quest, you see?"

"Why is an A rank like you in such a remote region?!"

A rank, is this guy is an adventurer?

This person came here on the subjugation quest for Grundom.

But I wonder if this Subjugation quest is to kill the person.

If it was a monster I would understand, but I won't kill a person.

The people in my village were killed by monster…those burning memories, those scenes come into my mind.

Skewered, killed, burned…life was stolen that day.

That tragedy is something I won't forget as long as I live. Will I…even be able to kill someone?

"I came here for something completely~ unrelated. Actually, Gantetsu should've also stopped by here for the same reason."

Gantetsu came here for the same reason as this fellow?

He didn't come here to subjugate the <Poison Salamander>, that much I understand.

"Nnnn, I wanted~ to do this quickly but I didn't expect for such a cute [girl] to block my attack."

He was moving his hips left and right while pointing his finger at me.

"Why are you going to kill this person?"

I finally got a grip on myself just as Roel opened her mouth.

"It's a subjugation quest, sweetie. Isn't normal to take his head? You girls are D rank? C rank? I really dunno what the normal rank is for this town."

"But killing a person…why…"

"Aaaa~ well, if there is a human resisting and being naughty then it's a subjugation quest. Capturing them is okay, but depending on the person and the quest it depends. Well whatever, I won't be capturing him~."

Kuku the person was laughing his head off, and suddenly he tried to go for the kill again.

It was the same thing that I deflected earlier, a knife with a short blade that he threw.

I deflected it exactly like before.

"Ooo~ooooo~oooo~? For such a low ranking [girl] like you? To me?"

"Stop it, even you won't win against that guy…"

When Grundom said that I did a 'Thumbs up' pose.

The guy's brows began to wrinkle, I saw a really amusing face.

"Can I consider this to be you hindering my subjugation?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"He isn't resisting anymore so there's no need to kill him."

"So just because he isn't resisting I'm not allowed to kill him~?"

He was laughing at me as if I was an idiot.

"If that's how you think, you'll definitely die someday."

After saying that he vanished from sight.

I wonder if he was under the impression that I couldn't win, I don't know if he was trying to convince me but for now the fight ended.

"Wa-haaaaaaaaaa, what was with that person?!"

With her patience exhausted, Roel took a deep breath and told him off.

"That guy is Xinbu, a superior A ranking adventurer. His class is Assassin. As you saw, that guy likes to mess around. He easily passed by me and became A ranked."

"Superior A rank……."

That person seemed to be indifferent to killing others.

Regardless of whether I become A ranked or not…I don't want to end up like him.

"I would have surrendered the moment he asked…for me to lose to a kid even using my full strength, I can't go on anymore. I'm so ashamed…"

After mining the items for the quest, we left the cave together with Grundom.

I kept and eye on him as we walked just in case he did something odd.

But Grundom was quiet from start to finish.

From what I see from his back, he had long since passed the age where he could dream optimistically. He was…a lonely adult.

* * *

In front of a station soldier, Grundom stated his name, crime, and everything he did.

The soldiers looked at us and Grundom, they couldn't believe it at the beginning.

"It seems Grundom has been caught."

"I saw him being escorted to the Kingdom Castle town. The people who caught him were C rank adventurers…both of them were girls."

Inside the guild, rumors spread like wildfire. Adventurers all over the building were sneaking glances at us.

"Really, you guys caught him? Isn't that amazing!"

"No, you're probably just mistaken…"

We lied to people that came up to us. The murmurs floating around were laced with trash talk and jealousy.

Last time something like this happened, they didn't believe that I took down the <Poison Salamander>. But unlike before I was recognized a little bit which felt pretty good.

If I had done this quest earlier, maybe that guy wouldn't have quit being an Adventurer.

I can't stop thinking about it, but I understand.

I remember the the appearance of that guy being depressed, and Grundom who obediently surrendered while not being forgiven.

We gave the ore to Kozow, he was glad that we were safe.

The reward was precisely 1000G, and we also got the reward for subjugating Grundom.

Roel was jumping for joy about our finances since we received a lot of money.

Suddenly I thought 'If that's the case, I want my pocket money to be increased!'.

"That's right, I promised you something. This is the best weapon and the most expensive one in the shop. Here you go, the Mithril Sword."

It's lighter than the iron sword, and much sharper. I see, it's like a mix of the Iron and Wing swords.

"Thank you, Kozow-san. This is a really amazing sword!"

"HAHAHA! Isn't it? After all it's a mithril-made weapon. It's a very precious weapon, but thinking of it as a gift and leaving it in your hands is a small price to pay for it to be used by someone so amazing."

"Good for you, Ryua-chan!"

"I also have a present for you."

Kozow walked out from the back of his shop carrying a staff.

On the tip there was a mark drawn like a red flame.

"<Fire Rod>. It's a staff that allows you to use flame magic.

It's popular with priests like you who can't use any magic attacks.

However, the strength depends on how much magical power you use on it."

"I-Is it fine for me to accept something so valuable?"

"I didn't really think about it, but you two were attacked not only by the floor monster but also Grundom. It was supposed to be an easy quest for you guys, with little danger

involved. Setting Grundom aside, running into the floor monster was just completely unexpected.”

It seems Kozow was in a very generous and jolly mood.

He was initially surprised when we said that we had captured Grundom, but he immediately believed what we said and praised us.

“But please don’t be reckless. In the future, if you think things are getting too dangerous make sure you escape. No matter what you are there to do, your life is much more important.”

“Yes. Thank you, we will keep your advice in mind.”

After leaving the generously kind Kozow’s shop, we went to buy food for dinner.

The sun started to set not long after.

In the blink of an eye the day ended, and as I watched the sun I recalled my hardships.

Without knowing, I spent 10 years of my life in the <Caves of Hell>.

All I did was fight continuously day after day.

During that time I never thought about anything else. But comparing then to now, I would never go back to those kinds of days.

Especially since I have Roel with me.

Little by little it seems that her existence became irreplaceable to me.

“Yes? What is it?”

“I-It’s nothing.”

Without realizing, I had been looking at Roel.

I suddenly got embarrassed and turned my face away.

“Hey, I want to try and go to the Wizard Kingdom and Metalika someday, and possibly the Avangard Kingdom Castle town from before.”

“Yeah, someday let’s go. Together.”

Together…I thought a little about what that meant.

I wonder, if Grundom had a comrade with him would things have been a little different?

Walking together, helping the other when they’re weak…in the end the adventurer he once was is now nothing but a shadow of the past.

(TL: 共に歩めず、劣等感がつのり、最後には道を踏み外した冒険者の成れの果て。)

Just what is my level cap?

If my level stopped rising and Roel surpassed me…

Would she wait for me?

Would we still walk together?

Would I end up like Grundom?

“What? Just a while ago you were doing the same thing.”

I hadn’t realized I was once again staring at Roel.

“Hey, Roel…we will be together forever, right?”

“What are you on about? Of course we will.”

“I’m glad…”

From the bottom of my heart I was relieved.

I want things to stay like this for a long as possible, even eternity.

Just like how the setting sun continued to burn without ever changing since the world was created.

Finally, the menu for dinner that I was starting to think about arrived.

* * *

Monster Book

[Behemoth of Catastrophe HP:815]

The floor monster on the 4th Floor of <Avangard Cave>.

Its steel-like skin prevents blades from piercing, no matter where you hit it.

It attacks adventurers by charging with its large body.

Credits

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